

Iron County Register

BY H. D. AKE.
IRONTON, MISSOURI.

UNDER A CLOUD; —OR— CLEARING HIMSELF.

The Thrilling and Absorbing Story
of a Great Crime.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,
AUTHOR OF "HER LIFE'S SECRET," AND
OTHER STORIES.

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CHAPTER XIV.
A NOTE OF WARNING.

What had Lyman Childer in common with
those two men? How was it that he should
be shaking hands with the thief who had
been caught in the very act of plundering his
house but a few weeks before?

They were unanswerable questions. The
district which Norris had felt once before
was back again with a new force. He
shrank from the dark speculations which
forced themselves into his mind. What
ever motives had brought Childer to such
association with those two frequenters
of Mike Malone's saloon, Lyman Childer
felt that he was not the one to pry into
them. Better, even, that Abraham Stone
should continue to evade justice, than that
he should disclose the unspeakable depths
that would end in sorrow and humiliation
to her toward whom his heart yearned in
that moment with a wonderful mingling
of pity and tenderness—so young, so bright,
so innocent, so joyous. Lyman Childer
beware of his deeds, that the shadow of his
evil should not fall upon her.

"Sort of wondering what could take our
straight-laced young partner into that she-
bang, eh? What would you give me to tell
you? I'd ought to be able to strike a good
bargain seeing the interest you seem to
take in him."

Norris faced about with an irrespressible
start. He had heard no step, but Hiram
Ingot stood at his elbow, his shaggy over-
coat white with the falling snow. His atti-
tude one of easy assurance, as he laid his
hand familiarly upon the other's arm.

"I reckon you've been making a mount-
ain out of a mole-hill," he added, with an
amused laugh. "Confess, never saw you
been suspecting our friend Lyman of any-
thing little short of murder or arson. Say
what would he think if he'd seen you
come out of the crib with me? I'm asking
your business, but you see it might
have an ugly look."

"Have you been watching me, sir?"
"I'll swear I haven't. I was more
surprised than when I saw you doze off
here and go to pecking into our friend's
business. That's the way it looks to me,
whether you like it or not."

"Do you know his business there?" ques-
tioned Norris, sharply. Ingot gave his
shoulders a significant shrug.

"Think I could make a close guess at it.
But come, if you're honest playing any let
us move on. The other that belongs to this
boat will be along pretty soon, and get it
into his head that there's mischief between
us. It's an easy thing to make mistakes of
that sort if one judges by appearances."

At another time Norris would have re-
sented the book-keeper's officious compas-
sion, but for once the latter came as a
relief to his own troubled thoughts.

"I shall be glad if you can explain Child-
er's conduct to me," he exclaimed, im-
pulsively. "It seems scarcely honorable
to try to fathom it this way, but how can
I help having my doubts? Do you scabin
shake hands with these two men? Do you
know that one of them was Abraham Stone?
I want to be Lyman Childer's friend,
Heaven knows, though I am afraid he does
scarce much for my friendship. I hope
I can help suspecting villainy of some
sort!"

"It was a mistake or more before the other
answered him.
"You're right. There is villainy, and it's
to get to the bottom of it that Lyman has
knuckled down to going hand-in-glove with
two rascals. You think he ought to turn
the fellow Stone over for house-breaking,
but I tell you, there is a mighty sight big-
ger game behind the scenes than that.
Taint for me to say what. Lyman hasn't
looked me into his confidence, but he ought
to, for I'll swear that we're both on the
same lay. You ain't so sharp-witted as you
ought to be if you don't get the idea I'm
driving at."

"You mean that, knowing Stone to have
been implicated in the express robbery, he
would rather fix that upon him than the
smaller crime?"
"Just so. Giving him rope to hang him-
self, don't you see? And there's the rest
of the gang to get at through him."
"But I don't see why Childer should be
on their track," said Norris, perplexed.
"His own loss was not an important one.
He refused to take any steps when the
matter was fresher than it is now."

"How do you know he did? May be he
only refused to do so to work with you, and
it's likely he had his reasons for it. I dare
say, now, you can't see why I should be
after them, either. Say! did you ever find
that bit of scalp into his right place? I like
that scratch on my head. I was afire
when I see that thing mounted under my
microscope."

Norris was taken perfectly aback. He
did not know what the object of the man's
assurance was, but that that Ingot was
being mistaken after all, and that Ingot was
only the good-natured, meddling busybody

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CLOUTED AND PORTENTOUS.

Carol's fair face wore a most unusual cloud.
She was troubled and unhappy, all on ac-
count of that incomparable brother of hers.
Lyman had been acting strangely. In the
first place he had called her away from the
Everleighs at an hour's notice, just when

everything was going splendidly, and the
match-making plan which her brain had
concocted seemed in a fair way for realiza-
tion, and that without any sufficient reason
for his act.

But worse than that had happened, and
cut deeper. But the day before this, she
sat reading and waiting for Lyman to come
out of his den, in the hour between his
home-coming and that for dinner, she heard
the door-bell ring, and the steps of the
servant go past to answer it. Lyman's door
opened the next instant.

"What's the matter?" she asked. "Mr. Bergman
is not at home—she is not at home—not
at home to him, now or in the future. Re-
member that, Sarah—and shut the door."
Every clearly spoken word was plainly aud-
ible to Norris before the door was closed
abruptly in his face—plainly audible in the
parlor, also, where the listener started to
her feet, tingling all over with indignant
feeling.

She ran to the window, and Norris, look-
ing up, saw her and lifted his hat. In a
moment the sash went up, admitting a blast
of wintry air, as Carol leaned impulsively
out.

"Please believe that I had nothing to do
with that. Mr. Bergman. I shall be very
glad to see you if you can ever forgive Ly-
man. I don't know what he means, but I
am sure he will be sorry by and by."

The window went down again before he
could answer a word, and Carol faced about
to look defiantly into the face of the man
who had entered in time to overhear the
most of her speech.

"It is a shame—a shame! Miss Everleigh
will not shamefully forgive you for this, nor
shall I!"
Nothing but quiet sadness looked out of
Lyman's eyes into the girl's flushed, indig-
nant face.

The young anemones may remain for
some time upon the spot where they are
placed, but they have the means of loco-
motion. This is effected by a double set
of muscles, one running around the body
and the other longitudinally arranged. I
have fourteen young anemones, all born in
my aquarium. Their ages vary from three
months down to the youngest, born four
days ago.

The anemones are possessed of a popu-
lar means of offense and defense. These
are poisoned threads or arrows, embedded
in the outer skin substance, and which are
capable of being shot out with considerable
force and inconceivable rapidity. They bury
themselves in whatever object against
which they are projected, and probably convey
to the wound some poisonous matter, which
renders their prey a helpless victim to the
anemone's greedy mouth.

The anemone has a sense of smell, also
has rudimentary eyes—not of much use, prob-
ably—but the most interesting sense which it
possesses is that of taste. Notwithstanding its